

Alabama history. She was born in Birmingham, growing up in a family compound of four houses that included the homes of her grandparents and great-grandparents near Oak Hill Cemetery. World War II was the formative event of her childhood and kindled her love of history, her country, and her state.

In high school and college, she was a competitive water skier. In 1953 she won both the U.S. Women's Overall National Championship and the Women's Overall World Championship. She was the first woman senior judge of the American Water Ski Association, and the first woman AWSA board member. In 1976, she was the first woman inducted into the Alabama Sports Hall of Fame.

Atkins holds three degrees from Auburn University, receiving her doctorate in history in 1974, the first time a Ph.D. in history was awarded at AU. She taught history at Auburn, briefly at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, and at Samford University, where in 1984 she became the founding director of the Samford London Study Centre. The next year she became the founding director of the Auburn University Center for the Arts and Humanities (now the Caroline Marshall Draughon Center), which she directed for a decade, bringing university scholars and citizens together to explore the ideas and experiences that inform the human condition, connecting the local to the universal, and providing an opportunity for learning and dialogue.

Atkins is a longtime member, former president, and for 15 years served as secretary of the Alabama Historical Association.

She was a founding board member of the Friends of the Alabama Archives, the editor of the Friends' first newsletter, and is on the board of the Alabama Archives and History Foundation. She has published many articles and books on Alabama history, including a study of the admission of women to Auburn University and the University of Alabama, a history of Birmingham and Jefferson County, and a biography of builder John M. Harbert III. She is also author of a corporate history of Brasfield & Gorrie and, most recently, of a history of Alabama Power Company which won the 2007 James Sulzby Book Award for the best book on Alabama history. She is a co-author of the Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Alabama: History of a Deep South State*, which also won the Sulzby Award.

She and her husband, George, have been married for 54 years and have four children and 13 grandchildren.

Leah Atkins is an outstanding example of the quality individuals who have devoted their lives to education. Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in congratulating her on this remarkable achievement. I know her husband, George, her family, and many friends join with me in praising her accomplishments and extending thanks for her many efforts over the years on behalf of the State of Alabama.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. HARRY E. MITCHELL

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 7, 2007

Mr. MITCHELL. Madam Speaker, on rollcall vote 856, the Westmoreland amendment to H.R. 2786, please accept my apologies as I was unavoidably detained and was not able to cast my vote in the allotted time. It was my intention to vote "yes" on this amendment.

TRIBUTE TO THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE AT MCGHEE TYSON AIRPORT

HON. JOHN J. DUNCAN, JR.

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 7, 2007

Mr. DUNCAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a piece of history in the Second District of Tennessee.

For the past 50 years, as people flew into my district, they weren't just landing in Knoxville but also touching down at a historic Tennessee Air National Guard Base.

Military planes taking off from that runway have been a part of some of the noblest causes of modern times, from the Berlin Air Lift to Operation Enduring Freedom.

It's a history of service that exemplifies the spirit that gave Tennessee the nickname of the Volunteer State, and once again the Knoxville community is at the forefront of that service.

The base is now celebrating 50 years of operations, and it is currently the proud home of the 134th Refueling Wing, as well as the 228th Combat Communications Squadron, the 119th Command and Control Squadron, the I.G. Brown Training and Education Center, the Academy of Innovative Ministries, and the 572nd Air Force Band.

It's not just the longevity of the base that is so remarkable, but also the quality of the men and women who serve there. The 134th has been consistently ranked nationally for its superb performance.

I would like to congratulate the nearly 2,000 full-time military and civilian personnel at the base and the many thousands more who pass through the facility each year for training. Their professionalism makes us proud.

Madam Speaker, in closing, I urge my colleagues to join me as I salute the 50th anniversary of the Air National Guard Base at McGhee Tyson Airport in Blount County, Tennessee. I know the facility and the men and women who operate it will play an important part in protecting our Nation for decades to come.

A TRIBUTE TO ST. ROBERT BELLARMINI CATHOLIC CHURCH

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 7, 2007

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay special recognition to St. Robert Bellarmine Church upon the celebration of its 100th anniversary.

The church was founded as Holy Trinity Parish in 1907 by Father Edward Wright. In 1939, the church was remodeled and given its present name. The choice of 17th century Italian cardinal St. Robert Bellarmine as patron saint reflects the church's modern-day identity as a spiritual, educational and charitable institution. St. Robert Bellarmine embodied an ideal blend of spirituality, intellect, public service and charity. He would certainly be proud of Burbank's St. Robert Bellarmine Church, which throughout its 100 years has dem-

onstrated a passionate commitment to these same ideals.

Today, St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Church serves the spiritual, educational, and charitable needs of its community. Its elementary school, as well as Bellarmine Jefferson High School, offers a Christ-centered learning environment with a challenging curriculum that educates students both academically and morally, preparing them for a lifetime of service to both God and their communities.

In addition, St. Robert Bellarmine sponsors and facilitates service-oriented groups that serve the homeless, the sick, and others in need in the Burbank community and beyond by actively engaging in food drives and raising charitable funds. Many leaders of St. Robert Bellarmine have used their leadership as a means for serving the community. Monsignor Martin Cody Keating, for example, served the church for 37 years after his work as an Army chaplain in World War I. During his priesthood, he worked as an advocate for labor and war veterans' issues. The current Priests and staff continue this legacy of public service today.

I ask all Members to join me today in honoring St. Robert Bellarmine Church upon the celebration of its 100th anniversary. The entire community joins me in thanking the parishioners of St. Robert Bellarmine Church for their religious, educational, and charitable contributions to California's 29th Congressional District.

CONGRATULATING JAMES I. HARRISON JR. ON HIS INDUCTION INTO THE ALABAMA ACADEMY OF HONOR

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 7, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, it is with great pride and pleasure that I rise to honor James I. Harrison Jr., on the occasion of his induction into the Alabama Academy of Honor.

Jimmy Harrison is one of the most influential men in the drug store business not only in Alabama but throughout the United States. He was a star on both the basketball court and on the baseball field at the University of Alabama, but he is an even better businessman and pharmacist. His success in the board room is only exceeded by his generosity and charitable spirit. His lifetime of service to his community and support of education have added in an immeasurable way to the well-being of our state.

Created in 1965, the Alabama Academy of Honor was created to recognize living Alabamians for their accomplishments and service that greatly benefits or reflects credit on the state of Alabama. Ten members may be elected annually by the Academy of Honor with no greater than 100 living members at a time.

Madam Speaker, the following tribute was presented to James I. Harrison at his ceremony of induction into the Academy in 2007. With your permission, I would like to add this tribute to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

JAMES I. HARRISON JR.

James I. Harrison, Jr., was born in Tuscaloosa on July 11, 1932. He attended St. John's Parochial School in Tuscaloosa and was one of the four graduates of the school's last